



Tony Horseman prepares to bring the ball under control during Saturday's game with Ilford while Len Worley looks on. (Match report back page).

# Perfection—that's Derby's formula for success in the professional ranks

By PATRICK VERCOE

THE WYCOMBE WANDERERS' supporters who braved last Wednesday's icy cold conditions to watch Derby County at Loakes Park could surely not have been disappointed with the outcome.

The result, a 6-0 victory to Derby, is of little significance. What is of para-

mount importance is the way Derby achieved it with such a high degree of skill.

There is no doubting the fact that Derby manager Brian Clough has hit upon a rich blend of talent and enthusiasm among his players.

Seasoned players like Dave Mackay, Frank Wig-nall and Alan Hinton have benefited the younger element on the playing staff with their vast experience and knowledge of the pro' game.

Of course, it is easy for a professional to produce his skills when meeting amateur opposition but what must be taken into consideration is that the technique must be there in the first place.

With so much room in which to operate Derby's players could not help but entertain with their concise passing, even on a bumpy surface, and the

quick switch in the pattern of the build-up.

## Joy to watch

Each individual player wanted to be in possession and when not on the ball was always ready to help a colleague. The running into the open spaces was a sheer joy to watch—these are hallmarks of a truly superb team in the making.

It is worthwhile comparing the Derby side with the Queens Park Rangers side which won the Division Two championship last year. Although the title race is far from over Derby have the necessary thorough approach to capture the title.

Derby's style is by far superior to Rangers' when at the same stage of their promotion season. I cannot foresee such a straight talking manager as Brian Clough allowing his team to decline within months of reaching his golden target.

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